





# ACT NOW

**S**ocial Protection Resource Centre (SPRC) in collaboration with Iqra University Chak Shahzad Campus, Islamabad organized an awareness lecture on “Climate Change & Health” on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at Iqra University, Chak Shahzad Campus Islamabad. **Chief Technical Advisor of SPRC, Dr. Razia Safdar** hosted the session. **Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan (Vice Chancellor Federal Health Services Academy Islamabad)** was the keynote speaker of the event. **Dr. Noureen Nishtar (Public Health Expert, Focal Point Climate Change WHO)** spoke about climate change and nutrition

The event started with the recitation of Holy Quran. After that **Dr. Razia Safdar** delivered introductory remarks on “Climate change, Extreme Events and Human Issues” in which she talked about the national context of climate change and health by discussing the climate hazards, exposures and vulnerability factors. She highlighted that the annual temperature will increase to 5.1<sup>0</sup>c by the end of the century if serious action is not taken by the world leaders to reduce Green House Gas Emissions (GHGs). Pakistan’s contributions to GHG globally are only 0.8% but it is 8<sup>th</sup> most effected countries of the world by Climate Change. Moreover, she further added that as air pollution is one of the major causes of climate change, has taken 121,301 lives in Pakistan in 2016. Lahore is one of the effected cities by air pollution and SMOG and these days Air Quality Index (AQI) of Lahore is at hazardous level. Climate change impacts on Human health can be direct and indirect including non-Communicable diseases, vector borne diseases, Communicable Diseases, mental health, Injuries, food insecurity, malnutrition, everyone is affected, but children, elderly, women, pre-existing disease conditions, migrants, and Persons with Disability (PWDs) and people with no social protection are vulnerable to extreme events as a result of climate Change. She also paid focus on the opportunities for action as a national response plan to climate change. She also highlighted the commitments by governments in the Conference of the Parties (COP 26). Furthermore, Dr. Razia Safdar also highlighted the role of SPRC in protection of vulnerable population like children, women, elderly population and PWDs. Lastly, she concluded that the role of youth is very important in combating the adverse impact of climate change by creating awareness campaigns as it is the need of time and acting at individual and community level.

Honourable **Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan** briefly talked about the “Climate Change and Health Issues” in the context of Pakistan. He focused on the vulnerabilities in the rural areas of Pakistan in terms of resources mobilization and allocation. Further, he stressed on the mixed health system in Pakistan by well-pointing out the low coverage by public sector and large regulatory issues in the private sector. Out-of-Pocket spending on health services is 89% in Pakistan which should be below 10%. Adding in that he said that in

Pakistan 36% of deaths occur due to communicable diseases while 56% is due to non-communicable diseases. Although, the burden of diseases is huge but preventable. He further discussed the life style risks factors in Pakistan and presented a health field model for a sound and productive health system. He also discussed three Philosophical approaches of “**Environmental Ethics**”. The first one was “**Anthropocentrism**” which states that “**Nature is an instrument for human manipulation**”. Second one was “**Biocentrism**” which states that “**All life forms have an inherent right to exist**”. The last one was about “**Ecocentrism**” which focusses on “**the interest of all species and natural features of earth’s ecosystem**”. Lastly, he discussed the green transformation to avoid the consequences of the climate change by using green policy approaches. He stressed on improving response by the government and inclusion of climate change impacts while planning.

Third speaker was, **Dr. Noureen Nishtar, National Programme officer Nutrition, Focal Point Climate Change WHO** talked about Overview on “**Climate change & Nutrition, Food Security and Agriculture**”. She emphasized on the adverse impacts of climate change on agriculture sector specifically on food security. Dr. Nishtar stated that climate change leads to droughts, tsunamis, floods, earthquakes and storms. The climate change leading to drought and floods has resulted in food insecurity and malnutrition. In order to combat climate change she focuses on the importance of “**Paris Agreement**” and highlighted that the “**Paris Agreement**” is a landmark commitment in responding to climate change and combating food insecurity and malnutrition. Further, she also highlighted the initiative taken by **WHO** in collaboration with **Ministry of Climate Change and Health** on **health vulnerabilities assessment, Pakistan clean air program** etc.

Dean Academics Iqra University, **COL (R) Dr Tahir Ijaz** concluded the session and emphasized that climate change is a burning issue and this should be addressed on the priority basis through collaboration of developing and developed countries. In the end he thanked all the speakers for such a fruitful session and emphasized that such events should be conducted frequently to create awareness among youth. Moreover, he appreciated the efforts of **SPRC** in sensitizing the youth timely on the crucial issue of climate change.



**Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan (VC, Federal HSA Islamabad)**



**Dr. Razia Safdar, CTA, SPRC**



**Dr. Noreen Nishtar, Public Health Expert, Focal Point Climate Change WHO**



**Students**



**Team SPRC**



**Honourable Guests**

